

Message Text

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ACTION EA-06

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7791

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 20214

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LIMDIS

EO 11652 GDS
TAGS SNAR TH
SUBJ US NARCOTICS CONTROL ASSISTANCE

REF: STATE 178687

1. PRIOR TO RECEIVING REFTEL EMB HAD ALREADY REQUESTED MEETING THIS WEEK WITH SENIOR ONCB OFFICERS TO DISCUSS OUR COUNTER PROPOSAL RE MAINTAINING INC SUPPLIED HELICOPTERS IN THAILAND. GUIDANCE CONTAINED PARA 1 REFTEL VERY HELPFUL IN THAT REGARD AND WILL ALLOW US TO BE MUCH MORE CONCRETE AND POSITIVE IN OUR APPROACH.

2. AT SAME TIME DEPT SHOULD REALIZE THAT OUR SUGGESTED APPROACH IS DESIGNED TO FIND BEST WAY OUT OF A DIFFICULT SITUATION IN WHICH WE CAN NOT JUSTIFY AT THIS POINT THE ADDITIONAL FOUR HELICOPTERS WHICH KRIANGSAK WANTS. EVEN IF ONCB AND GENERAL KRIANGSAK ACCEPT OUR APPROACH IT SHOULD BE REALIZED THAT THEY WILL NOT BE HAPPY AS KRIANGSAK DOES WANT HELICOPTERS DESPITE LACK OF A DEVELOPED RATIONALE. (FYI WE HAVE NOT YET IN FACT RECEIVED A FORMAL RTG REQUEST FOR HELICOPTERS. SINCE MAY, ONCB HAS BEEN LABORING OVER SUCH A REQUEST BUT SO FAR APPARENTLY HAS HAD DIFFICULTY IN CONFIDENTIAL

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PUTTING TOGETHER A SOUND PACKAGE. END FYI).

3. DEPARTMENT'S ASSUMPTION CORRECT WITH REGARD TO THE CURRENT STATE OF CROP SUBSTITUTION PROGRAM. BALL IS IN THAI COURT. FOR PAST MONTH WE HAVE BEEN PRESSING ONCB IN FURTHER INFORMATION SO THAT WE COULD PROCEED IMMEDIATELY IN THE PREPARING OF A PROAG. IN LATEST EXCHANGES ONCB

PROMISED THAT NEEDED INFORMATION WOULD BE FORTHCOMING WITH-
IN THE NEXT WEEK. WE WILL CONTINUE TO PRESS.

4. AS IS OFTEN THE CASE IN KRIANGSAK'S DISCUSSIONS WITH
SENIOR VISITORS, HIS REMARKS RE US NARCOTICS CONTROL
ASSISTANCE SHOULD BE INTERPRETED AS BEING MORE DESIGNED TO
INFLUENCE HIS VISITOR RATHER THAN REFLECTING ACTUAL STATE
OF PLAY. WE HAD PREVIOUSLY EXPLAINED TO CONGRESSMAN EVANS
LIKIHOOD THAT KRIANGSAK WOULD RAISE BOTH OF THESE ISSUES,
AND HAD EXPLAINED TO HIM FULLY THE BACKGROUND. CONSEQUENTLY
CONGRESSMAN EVANS TOOK THE VERY APPROPRIATE APPROACH
WHICH HE DID DURING THEIR DISCUSSION. WE ALSO TOLD THE
CONGRESSMAN THAT WE DID NOT BELIEVE IT IS USEFUL TO GET
INTO ANY DETAILED EXCHANGES ON THAI DEFICIENCIES IN
PLANNING/COORDINATION RE HELICOPTERS AND CROP SUBSTITUTION
IN MANNER WHICH MIGHT EMBARRASS NEW ONCB LEADERSHIP TO
DETRIMENT OF OUR WORKING RELATIONSHIPS.

5. WE WILL KEEP DEPARTMENT APPRISED OF OUR DISCUSSIONS.
WHEN WE HAVE REQUIRED INFORMATION FROM THAI WE WILL SUBMIT
OUR PROPOSED PROAG AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. WE WILL ALSO
DISCUSS WITH HALL HOW HE CAN BEST HELP US IN DEVELOPING
HELICOPTER PROGRAM. O'DONOHUE

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